

REMARKS

The present reply is responsive to the Office Action dated June 15, 2005. Claims 1-9 are again presented for consideration in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,097,605 ("Klatt") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,461,170 ("Oliphant"). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Klatt and Oliphant in view of a statement by the Examiner that while neither teaches a dummy chip as claimed, "it is expedient in the art to provide dummy chip card for insertion into otherwise empty or nonused slots of adapters..." (Office Action, pg. 10). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

The instant application was filed on November 6, 2001 claiming priority to Japanese Application No. P2000-344453, which was filed on November 10, 2000, and Japanese Application No. P2001-091268, which was filed on March 27, 2001. The latter case itself claims priority to the former case. The Examiner acknowledged applicants' claim for foreign priority at page 2 in the pending Office Action. English language translations of the Japanese priority documents are enclosed along with a statement that the translations are accurate.

*Oliphant* was filed on May 17, 2001 and issued on October 8, 2002. *Oliphant* was filed after the priority dates November 10, 2000 and March 27, 2001. Therefore, as *Oliphant* was filed after the priority dates of the instant application, applicants respectfully submit that *Oliphant* cannot be used as prior art against the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully requests that the § 103(a) rejection be withdrawn, and submits that claims 1-9 are in condition for allowance.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Office Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: September 30, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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